IV. COMBINATION OF LETTERS OF THE DIVINE NAME

Ongoing recitations of letters and divine names are well-known techniques for the attainment of paranormal states of consciousness; they are used alike by Christian,[151] Muslim,[152] Hindu,[153] and Japanese[154] mystics. Most, if not all, of these techniques seem to operate upon the consciousness of the mystic by enabling him to focus his attention upon a short phrase or sentence—"There is no God but Allah," "Jesus Christ," *Namou Amida Boutso*—or even a few letters, as in the Hindu *Aum*. This relatively simple device is comparable to fixing one's vision upon a point;[155] the mystic must escape the impact of external factors, and in this respect his activity is similar to that of someone undergoing sensory deprivation.

Ancient Jewish sources, primarily those of Heikhalot literature, present a technique closely parallel to those found in non-Jewish forms of mysticism.[156] These affinities become evident when one compares some of the details shared by the Jewish and non-Jewish techniques. In another type of Jewish technique, however, the psychological result is different, given the discrepancy between this technique and its parallels on one important issue—namely, the use by Jewish mystics of a complex and intricate system of letters to be pronounced or meditated upon. Instead of the simple formulas of non-Jewish techniques, the Jewish texts evince elaborate combinations of letters with hundreds of components. Moreover, as we shall see, according to Jewish practice the mystic had not only to pronounce them according to strict, fixed patterns but had also actively to construct these combinations as part of the mystical practice. The effect of combinatory techniques was the result both of the process of their utterance and of the hyperactivation of the mind required to produce the contents that were pronounced. These monotonous repetitions of well-known phrases or divine names thus achieved not a calmness or stillness of the mind but rather a high excitation of the mental processes, triggered by the unceasing need to combine letters, their vocalizations, and various bodily acts—movements of the head or hands or respiratory devices.[157] Although superficially similar to a variety of mystical techniques based upon language, the Kabbalistic practice possessed an idiosyncratic psychological mechanism, only rarely occurring in such techniques. I shall briefly discuss here some sources concerning the pronunciation or repetition of divine names—a practice paralleled in non-Jewish techniques; I shall then discuss the medieval use of combinations of letters, which differs significantly from the more ancient technique.

It is a striking fact that a detailed and systematic technique of letter

combination forming the divine name appears for the first time in a work of R. Eleazar of Worms and, under his influence, among Spanish Kabbalists. More than in the other examples of mystical techniques attested by Franco-German sources prior to their appearance in Spanish Kabbalah, in this case there are reliable indications that the repercussions of this technique in Spain were directly connected to the Ashkenazic culture.[158] Abraham Abulafia explicitly mentions R. Eleazar's works as books he had studied; thus, the transition can easily be proven.[159] The other two Kabbalists of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries acquainted with combination techniques—R. Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi and R. David ben Yehudah he-Ḥasid—were either Ashkenazic by origin (the former) or had visited Germany (the latter).[160] We can reasonably conclude, then, that the mystical techniques surveyed below passed from Germany to Spain. According to the historical evidence, this movement took place only from the middle of the thirteenth century, thereby excluding Provençal and most Catalan theosophical Kabbalah from its influence. Thus, in contrast to the Ashkenazic influence on the emergence of the Kabbalah in those centers with regard to theosophical issues, this mystical technique was cultivated in Spanish circles relatively late. The delay can be understood in terms of the topic's esoteric nature, a feature that seems to be corroborated by the fact that, even centuries after R. Eleazar of Worms had recorded some details of this technique, they remained in manuscript, as did the mystical handbooks of Abulafia and his disciples.[161]

Several indications of recitations of names—either angelic or divine—are extant in Heikhalot literature.[162] These reservations, as we have seen above, were still practiced during the Gaonic period.[163] There is conclusive evidence that the pronunciation of mystical names was known and cultivated in Germany, at least during the lifetime of R. Eleazar of Worms. The anonymous author of *Sefer ha-Ḥayyim*[164] indicates: "He pronounces the holy names or names of the angels in order to be shown [whatever] he wishes, or to inform him of a hidden matter, and then the Holy Spirit reveals itself to him, and his flesh . . . trembles . . . because of the strength of the Holy Spirit."[165]

The fiery attack by R. Moshe of Taku, written shortly after the *floruit* of R. Eleazar, is highly instructive. He speaks of persons "void of understanding" and "heretics who pose as[166] prophets and are accustomed to pronouncing the holy names; and sometimes, they direct [their heart] when they read them [pronounce the names] and their soul is terrified. . . . But when the power of the pronounced name leaves him, he returns to his initial state of confused reason."

These statements provide appropriate background to understand R. Ele-

azar's statement that neither the divine names nor their vocalizations ought to be written down, lest those "devoid of understanding" use them.[167] R. Eleazar's fears can easily be understood in light of the criticism of a more conservative figure such as Taku; significantly, both use the same phrase, *ḥaserey da'at*, in order to describe those who make use of the divine names. R. Eleazar, however, confesses that[168] "some future things and spirits were revealed to us by means of the [divine?] attributes[169] through the pronunciations of the depths of the names[170] in order to know the spirit of the wisdoms."

The use of the phrase "revealed to us" clearly shows that this refers to a practical technique, not a repetition of no longer active formulas;[171] therefore, the three above-mentioned statements, like the analogous evidence in the preceding section concerning the ascent of soul, are conclusive proof of the experiential use of the pronunciation of divine names. The names cited by R. Eleazar shortly before the above text are mystical names already occurring in Jewish texts related to Heikhalot literature, such as *Adiriron, Bihriron,* and so on.[172] Moreover, the assertion of this Ashkenazic Ḥasidic master that each of the forty-two letters of the divine name is a divine name in itself obviously reflects an ancient Jewish conception.[173] It is therefore reasonable to assume that R. Eleazar preserved ancient mystical material and techniques that had been passed down to Spanish Kabbalists via the intermediacy of Ashkenazic masters, the most important of whom, Abraham Abulafia, elaborated upon the received traditions in a relatively detailed fashion.[174] Abulafia also explicitly refers to Heikhalot literature as an important source of his use of divine names.[175] Before entering into a brief presentation of Abulafia, however, I should like to discuss the influence on two important Kabbalists who flourished in Spain of a peculiar pattern of combination of divine letters occurring in R. Eleazar.

In his *Sefer ha-Shem*,[176] R. Eleazar discusses the combination of the letters of the Tetragrammaton with each of the letters of the alphabet.[177] Moreover, these combinations are in turn combined with their vocalizations by two of the six vowels. Thus, the combination of *'aleph* with *yod*, vocalized according to these six vowels, is expressed by this sample:

אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי
אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי
אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי
אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי
אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי
אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי	אִי

R. Eleazar explains the combinations of these letters only on the cosmological and theological levels, with no reference to their possible use as a mystical technique. However, the fact that not only letters but also vowels are included in this table points to a praxis of pronunciation. Against the background of the earlier evidence concerning R. Eleazar's revelation using divine names, and the fact that he perceived their vocalization as connected with the use of these names, we can infer that, notwithstanding his silence, the author conceived these combinations as a mystical practice. This assumption is corroborated by a description of the creation of a *golem* (the vivification of a humanlike form made out of clay) by R. Eleazar, in which he wrote that we must pronounce all the letters of the alphabet over every limb of the *golem*, combined with one of the letters of the Tetragrammaton and vocalized according to the six vowels mentioned above.[178] Thus, despite the author's silence, the table found in *Sefer ha-Shem* was meant to be pronounced as part of a magical praxis for the creation of a *golem* by a certain incantation of combinations of letters. According to Scholem, this technique can culminate in ecstasy.[179] This assumption seems to be corroborated by R. Eleazar's confession that he received a revelation by means of the divine names.

The table above was copied in its entirety by R. David ben Yehudah he-Hasid, who presumably learned it during his visit in Regensburg.[180] He, however, considered the thirty-six combinations and vocalizations to be paralleled by the thirty-six movements of the *lulav*, an issue I was unable to locate in Ashkenazic texts. R. David's contemporary, R. Joseph Ashkenazi, an important source for some of his Kabbalistic ideas, elaborated upon R. Eleazar's table in his *Commentary on Genesis Rabbah*[181] and in an unidentified discussion of the creation of a *golem*.[182] These two Kabbalists do not, strictly speaking, belong to the ecstatic Kabbalah; however, both of them were interested in combinatory techniques, as indicated in their works. R. Joseph quoted Abraham Abulafia's *Commentary on Sefer Yezirah* and, as we shall see in the next section, preserved an important text on ecstasy and visualization of the divine names;[183] R. David apparently received revelations of Elijah.[184] Although I cannot conclusively describe these Kabbalists as following the mystical technique of R. Eleazar, the supposition that they were more than mere repositories of the Ashkenazic master's views seems a reasonable one.

There is little room for doubt as to the use of R. Eleazar's technique of combination for mystical purposes by his older contemporary, R. Abraham Abulafia. In his mystical handbook, *'Or ha-Sekhel,* one finds a similar table, albeit in slightly changed form: instead of six basic vowels, Abulafia prefers only five; thus, his tables consist of twenty-five basic combinations of letters and vowels.[185] As in R. Eleazar, Abulafia's table is no more than a sample for the recitation of the combinations of all twenty-two letters, combined with the four letters of the Tetragrammaton. According to this table, the pronunciation of the divine name involves many sublime matters, and whoever does not take care when performing it endangers himself. For this reason, asserts Abulafia, the ancient masters concealed it. But the time has now come to reveal it, since, as he says, the messianic eon has begun.[186] Abulafia's assessment is indeed interesting: he argues that he merely reveals a hidden technique that has been in existence for a long time. This assertion strengthens the earlier assumption that R. Eleazar's table was intended to serve mystical, and not only magical, purposes.

Abulafia was more than a Kabbalist who disclosed esoteric techniques; his *'Or he-Sekhel* was an attempt to integrate this technique into a speculative system including a philosophy of language and a definition of the ultimate goal of the technique—the attainment of *unio mystica*.[187] Thus, he succeeded in imposing an elaborate mystical technique on a larger public, as convincingly indicated by the relatively large number of manuscripts of *'Or ha-Sekhel*.[188] In early sixteenth-century Jerusalem, R. Yehudah Albotini composed a mystical handbook, *Sullam ha-'Aliyah,* based upon Abulafia's techniques, including among other things the tables found in *'Or ha-Sekhel*.[189] Moreover, Abulafia's tables, accompanied by some of his explanations, were quoted in one of the classics of Kabbalistic literature, Cordovero's *Pardes Rimmonim*.[190] Significantly, this Safedian Kabbalist begins his extensive discussion of pronunciation of the divine name with Abulafia's system,[191] afterward mentioning that of R. Eleazar of Worms, copied from a secondary source.[192] As we learn from the testimony of R. Mordecai Dato, a disciple of Cordovero, his master, influenced by Abulafia's works beyond their quotation, practiced Abulafian techniques and taught them to his students.[193] Furthermore, he regarded Abulafia's technique as a "Kabbalistic tradition transmitted orally, or the words of a *Maggid* [celestial messenger]."[194] It is no wonder, then, that he considered Abulafia's type of Kabbalah as superior even to that of the *Zohar*.[195] Cordovero, however, not only contributed to the dissemination of Abulafia's tables, as he did with those of R. Eleazar; quoting Abulafia's explanations, he also propagated the view that the union of the human and divine minds was to be achieved through this technique,[196] which, as Abulafia put it, "draws down the supernal force in order to cause it to be united with you."[197] This Hermetical understanding of Abulafia's technique[198] had an important influence on the Hasidic perception of *devekut* as attained by causing divine spiritual force to descend upon the mystic.[199] Strangely, the old Ashkenazic mystical technique

had to travel throughout Spain and Italy, as well as Safed, before it eventually returned to Ashkenazic mysticism.

I have surveyed the history of one combinatory technique. A few others, connected with the recitation of the alphabet according to the permutations of letters given in *Sefer Yezirah,* were used both by R. Eleazar of Worms and by Abulafia.[200] The latter presented several elaborate techniques in his other handbooks: *Sefer Hayye ha-'Olam ha-Ba, Sefer ha-Heshek* and *Sefer 'Imrei Shefer.* This willingness to propose more than one technique as a suitable path for attaining a mystical experience is decisive proof that Abulafia transcended the magical perception shared by the mystics that there was one and only one way to attain the supreme experience. Although his various techniques shared some elements in common, such as the need for isolation, breathing exercises, bodily movements, and the wearing of clean garments, they differed in many basic details. Abulafia also cultivated the pronunciation of letters of the divine names inscribed variously in different kinds of circles, a technique having nothing to do with the table technique mentioned above. These circles consisted of permutations of some of the biblical and later divine names according to different combinatory techniques; the use of circles is also conspicuous in *Hayye ha-'Olam ha-Ba,* which was aptly designated *The Book of Circles.*[201] No wonder, then, that one of the most elaborate visions reported by Abulafia is that of a circle, a Kabbalistic mandala including both cosmic and psychological structures.[202] Interestingly, the vision of circles recurs in the works of other ecstatic Kabbalists, who used Abulafian or similar techniques of combinations of letters, such as R. Isaac of Acre, R. Shem Tov ibn Gaon, and R. Elnathan ben Moses Kalkis.[203]

In *'Or ha-Sekhel* Abulafia emphasizes, more than does R. Eleazar in his works, that his tables, as well as his circles, are methods for facilitating all possible combinations of the letters of the divine names. These letters are sometimes permutated without adding other letters; at other times—as in the table—the entire alphabet is used in order to pronounce the letters of divine names. Although the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton was conceived as a transgression of both biblical and rabbinic interdictions, there was no attack on Abulafia's technique on this ground in the Kabbalistic material with which I am acquainted. Although it is a conspicuously anomian technique, the recitation of letters as described by Abulafia managed to escape the fierce criticism to which his prophetic and messianic activities were subjected.

We can summarize this short survey of one of Abulafia's techniques by stating that the incorporation of R. Eleazar's method of combination of letters into the Spanish Kabbalah fertilized it by allowing for the construction of a more elaborate technical path intended to attain mystical goals such as revelations and union with supernal beings. This technique remained the patrimony of a few, albeit important, Kabbalists, contributing to the emergence of extreme types of mystical experiences.

V. VISUALIZATION OF COLORS AND KABBALISTIC PRAYER

The final type of mystical technique to be surveyed here is a nomian one relating to a particular understanding of the Kabbalistic meaning of *kavvanah*—that is, that intention which, according to the Talmud, should accompany the performance of the commandments. In Provence and Catalonia, the Kabbalists had already emphasized the mystical significance of such intention; it was no doubt connected to the theosophical system of Sefirot, toward which the Kabbalist was to direct his thought throughtout prayer.[204] The basic assumption of earlier Kabbalah, which remained unchanged for centuries, was that the words of prayer were symbols of the supernal divine potencies and hence could serve either as starting points for the contemplation of higher entities or as ways of influencing them, or as both together.

According to this understanding, *kavvanah* effects an elevation of human thought from the words of prayer to the sefirotic realm, apparently achieved without any intermediary mental operation or external factor. The intrinsic affinity of language to its sources in the divine realm enables human thought to ascend to the Sefirot and to act upon them.[205] Externally, the Kabbalist is supposed to recite the standard prayer text; the mystical *kavvanah* is an additional activity, in no way intended to change the halakhic regulations of prayer.[206] Mystical *kavvanah* can therefore be defined as a nomian technique, using as it does the common prayers as a vehicle for accomplishing mystical and theurgical aims.

But this presentation of mystical prayer fails to answer certain basic questions concerning the psychological processes enabling the shift from language to Sefirot. Is concentration on the symbolic connotations of a given word the only mental operation that ensures the mystical elevation of thought? How does the linguistic medium, corporeal in both its written and its oral forms, enable human thought or soul to penetrate utterly spiritual dimensions of reality? Can *kavvanah* be regarded as an attempt to interiorize the supernal pattern of Sefirot in some unknown way in order to cleave to and be capable of influencing it?[207] No answers to these and similar questions regarding the psychological aspects of *kavvanah* have been proposed, since they were evidently never asked by academic research. I cannot propose an answer or even a

142. See *Heikhal ha-Berakhah*, vol. I, fol. 31a.

143. *Zohar Ḥai* III, fol. 129d:

שהיה הגוף מוטל במעט חיות בענן כמו שעושין כל בעלי עליות נשמה מרן הריב"ש
וכיוצא. והרי הגוף מוטל כאבן אבל אינו אלא שעה קטנה ושתי שעות ולא יותר. והגוף
של משה רבינו מונה ארבעים יום וחזר בתוכו אחרי ארבעים יום.

144. Cf Exod. 24:18. Compare the Lurianic view of Moses' ascent adduced by Scholem, *Sabbatai Ṣevi*, p. 53.

145. See Philo's allegorization of Moses as the soul ascending to heaven; cf. Segal (n. 1 above), p. 1358.

146. *Megillat Setarim*, pp. 15–16:

וייחדרתי יחוד והתקשרתי בנפש מרן האלקי האר"י ומהדביקות הזו נפלה עלי תרדמה
וראיתי כמה נשמות עד שנפל עלי אימה ופחד ורעש כרדכי, והנראה מהם מעויין
שאמלה לגדולה. ועליתי עוד וראיתי את ר' יהושע־העשיל . . . והקיצותי.

147. Compare another dream of R. Isaac Safrin, *Megillat Setarim*, p. 23, where he learned from a certain event that he would "rise to greatness, satisfaction and joy."

148. This is the date of this experience.

149. On the relationship between ben 'Atar and Ḥasidism, see Dan Manor, "Rabbi Ḥaim ben 'Atar in Ḥasidic Writings" (in Hebrew), *Pe'amim* 20 (1984): 88–110. Manor mentions neither the Besht's epistle referred to above nor the question of soul ascent in ben 'Atar.

150. See M. Idel, "On the Metamorphosis of an Ancient Technique of Prophetic Vision in the Middle Ages" (in Hebrew), *Sinai* 86 (1980): 1–7.

151. Irenée Hausherr, "La Méthode d'oraison hesychaste," *Orientalia Christiana* 9 (1927): 68–69.

152. G. C. Anawati and L. Gardet, *Mystique musulmane: Aspects et tendances, expériences et techniques* (Paris, 1976), pp. 187–234.

153. See, for example, Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (Princeton, N.J., 1971), pp. 200ff., esp. pp. 216–219, where the similarities between the Sufic "dhikr" and parallel Hindu phenomena are noted.

154. D T. Suzuki, *Essais sur le Bouddhisme Zen* (Paris, 1943), 2:141–151, and passim.

155. See, for example, Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 47–52.

156. See Anawati and Gardet, *Mystique musulmane*, pp. 189–190.

157. For a detailed description of these components of Kabbalistic mystical techniques, see Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, Chap. I.

158. On the influence of Ashkenazic theology on Spanish Kabbalah, see Joseph Dan, "The Vicissitudes of the Esotericism of the German Ḥasidim" (in Hebrew), in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to Gershom G. Scholem* (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 91–99. Dan, however, does not discuss the influence of R. Eleazar's mystical technique.

159. See, for example, "Ve-Zot li-Yihudah," in Jellinek, *Auswahl*, p. 25.

160. See Matt, *The Book of the Mirrors*, p. 1.

161. See the quotation from R. Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah* in n. 167 below.

162. See Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, Chap. I.

163. See Sec. II above.

164. On this treatise, see Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 143ff.

165. MS Cambridge, Add. 643, fol. 19a; MS Oxford 1574, fol 34b; MS Vatican 431, fol. 39a:

אבל הוא מזכיר שמות הקרושים או שמות המלאכים כדי להראות לו רצונו או להודיעו
דבר סתר, ואז רוח הקורש נגלה עליו והבשר . . . נפעמת . . . מעוז רוח הקרש.

166. *'Oẓar Neḥmad* III (1860), p. 84:

חסרי דעת, המינים. לעשות עצמם נביאים, מרגילים עצמם בהזכרת שמות הקרושים
ופעמים יכוונו בקריאתן והנשמה מתבהלת . . . כשמסתלק ממנו כח השם שהזכיר, חוזר
לכמות שהיה ברעת מבוהלת.

See also Scholem, *Major Trends*, pp. 102–103.

167. *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah* MS Oxford 1812, fol. 55b:

"ומן הדין לא היה לכתוב הכל ולא לנקבו בו פן ישתמשו חסרי הרעת".

On this treatise, see Joseph Dan, "The Ashkenazi Ḥasidic *Gates of Wisdom*," in *Hommage à Georges Vajda*, ed. G. Nahon and C. Tonati (Louvain, 1980), pp. 183–189; Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 44–57.

168. Ibid, fol. 55b:

"נגלה לנו קצת ענייני עתידות ורוחו', במרות על פי הזכרות עומקי השמות לידע
רוח החכמות."

169. "מירות"; the significance is uncertain.

170. The phrase "עומקי השמות" is reminiscent of certain phrases occurring in Abraham Abulafia's works as referring to the highest Kabbalistic path. See Idel, "Maimonides and Kabbalah," nn. 83, 84, 93, 99, and Gikatilla's phrase, n. 105.

171. Compare also R. Eleazar's description of the transmission of the Tetragrammaton to a disciple, which seems to reflect not only an ancient practice but also an extant praxis. Cf. Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 74–76; Dan's assertion (p. 75) that the ceremony of transmission of the name has only theological, not magical, overtones must apparently be modified in the direction of more experiential implications of the knowledge gained by the reception of the name.

172. See Idel, "The World of Angels in Human Shape," pp. 1–15.

173. On this issue, see Idel, "The Concept of the Torah," p. 28.

174. See Idel, "The World of Angels in Human Shape," p. 13 n. 52, and Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, Chap. I; there I deal as well with passages from R. Isaac ibn Latif and R. Moses of Burgos.

175. See, for example, *'Oẓar 'Eden Ganuz*, MS Oxford 1580, fol. 149b, where he mentions the "Chapters of Heikhalot," "The Book of Bahir," and "The Alphabet of R. 'Akiva."

176. MS München 43, fol. 219a. This is a short section from the larger *Sefer ha-Shem*, entitled *'Eser Havvayot*, circulating in some manuscripts. This table was copied from this compendium by R. Yehudah Ḥayyat in his commentary on *Ma'arekhet ha-'Elohut*, fol. 197b, and subsequently in R. Moses Cordovero's *Pardes Rimmonim*, fol. 97c-d. The latter knew of two versions of this table; on the second of these, see n. 192 below.

177. The vowels clearly occur in order to facilitate the pronunciation of the consonants; however, I assume that the mystical and magical feature of the vowels, known from ancient Hellenistic magic, may also have been known in Jewish circles. On vowel mysticism in Abulafia's circle, see also R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, "Kabbalistische Buchstabenmystik und der Traum," *Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte* 8 (1956): 164–169.

178. *Commentary on Sefer Yeẓirah* (Premizlany, 1883), fol. 15d.

"ויתגלגלו בתחלת א"ב ואח"כ ינלגל בהברת א א א א א ולעולם את השם עמהם אי
וכל הא"ב וכו'."

On the penetration of this text into Renaissance literature and praxis, see M. Idel, "Hermeticism and Judaism," par. V.

179. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, p. 187.

180. See Matt, *The Book of the Mirrors*, p. 95; *'Or Zaru'a*, MS British Library 771, fol. 92b. It was copied from the latter text by R. Moses Cordovero in *Pardes Rimmonim*, fol 98a. R. Menahem Recanati was also acquainted with this peculiar theory of thirty-six combinations of letters and vowels, although he did not copy the table; see his *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, fol. 49b. Nevertheless, the commentator on this text, R. Mordecai Jaffe, obviously perceived the original source of Recanati and gives the detailed combinations.

181. See Moshe Hallamish, ed., *Kabbalistic Commentary of Rabbi Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi on Genesis Rabbah* (Jerusalem, 1984), p. 256. Here, as in his unidentified text (see n. 182 below), the recitation of the combinations are related to the creation of the golem.

182. MS Sasson 290, pp. 198–200; this text will be printed and analyzed elsewhere. The identification is provisional, as this text is also close to R. David ben Yehudah he-Hasid's thought.

183. Ibid., p 199.

184. Idel, "Kabbalistic Material," p. 198.

185. For further details, see Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, Chap. I.

186. *'Or ha-Sekhel*, MS Vatican 233, fol. 97b, MS Fulda 4, fol. 32b:

ומפני שיש בהזכרה ענינים גדולים, ואם לא יזהר בה אדם מאר יסתכן בהם, הסתירוה
הראשונים ואמנם עתה בזמן הזה כבר נתגלה הנסתר מפני שהגיעה השכחה אל התכלית
האחרונה וסוף השכחה הוא ראש ההזכרה.

187. See Idel, "Abraham Abulafia and *Unio Mystica*."

188. Idel, *Abraham Abulafia*, pp. 54–55 n. 161.

189. See Gershom Scholem, "Chapters from *Sefer Sullam ha-'Aliyah* of R. Yehudah Albotini" (in Hebrew), *Kiryat Sefer* 22 (1945): 168; David Blumenthal, *Understanding Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1982), 2:65–66.

190. *Pardes Rimmonim*, fol. 97a-b.

191. Cordovero does not mention Abulafia's name because, at the time he composed *Pardes Rimmonim*, he mistook this for a work of Gikatilla, *Sha'ar ha-Nikkud*. However, in another, later work, he refers correctly to both author and book.

192. See n. 176 above.

193. See M. Idel, "Some Remarks on R. Abraham Abulafia and R. Moses Cordovero" (in Hebrew), *Da'at* 15 (1985): 117–120.

194. *Pardes Rimmonim*, fol. 97b:

"ודבריו דברי קבלה מפה אל פה או מפי מגיד"

195. See Idel, "Some Remarks," p. 120.

196. *Pardes Rimmonim*, fol 97a:

וכשבאה דעתך להדבק ברעתו הנותנת בך דעת, צריכה להסיר מעליה כל הדעות
הזרות זולת דעתו המשותפת בינך ובינו.

197. Ibid, fol. 97b.:

"ומושך כח העליון להדבקו בך"

198. See Chap. III above.

199. For more on this development, see Idel, "Perceptions of Kabbalah" and Chap. VII below.

200. The use of the combinatory techniques of *Sefer Yezirah* for mystical purposes is a highly interesting issue, which cannot be presented here. For the time being, see Nicolas Sed, "Le *Sefer Ha-Razim* et la méthode de 'combinaison des lettres,' " *REJ* 130 (1971): 295–303.

201. See Idel, "Egidio da Viterbo and R. Abraham Abulafia's Books" (in Hebrew), *Italia* 2, nos. 1–2 (1981): 48.

202. See Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, Chap. III.

203. Cf. ibid.

204. See on this topic Gershom Scholem, "The Concept of Kavvanah in the Early Kabbalah," in *Studies in Jewish Thought*, ed. Alfred Jospe (Detroit, 1981), pp. 162–180.

205. See Scholem, *Les Origines de la Kabbale*, pp. 316–319, 437–446.

206. See Gottlieb, *Studies*, pp. 38–55.

207. See above, Chap. III, on the possibility that a certain Geronese text implies interiorization of the ten Sefirot and their unification.

208. See on this issue Arthur J. Deikman, "Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience," in *Altered States of Consciousness*, ed. C. Tart (New York, 1972), pp. 25–46.

209. Some of the historical details concerning this issue were dealt with in Idel, "Kabbalistic Prayer and Colours."

210. On the problem of color in Jewish mysticism, see Gershom Scholem, "Colours and Their Symbolism in Jewish Tradition and Mysticism," *Diogenes* 108 (1979): 84–111; 109 (1980): 64–77. Scholem, despite his lengthy discussions on color, never refers to their visualization within the context of Kabbalistic prayer!

211. I hope to deal with this attribution in a separate study, in which Kabbalistic commentaries on this small treatise will be printed.

212. See Scholem, "The Concept of Kavvanah," pp. 171–174.

213. The treatise attributed to R. 'Azriel deals exclusively with lights connected to prayer, not with colors; later Kabbalists have nevertheless interpreted these lights as colors.

214. MS Cambridge, Add. 505, fol. 8a:

אמ"ר דוד: אין לנו רשות לצייר הי' ספירות אלא כראשי פרקים הבאים לידך כגון
מגן אברהם לחסד וכגון חונן הדעת לתפ'. לכן תצייר לעולם באותו צבע של ראשי
פרקים, שהוא החשמל של הספירה, כי החשמל הוא מלבוש הספירה בעצמה סביב
סביב ואח"כ תמשוך השפע בציורך מעומק הנהר אל העולמות עד אלינו וזהו הנכון
המקובל מפה אל פה.

215. The identification of this R. David with R. David ben Yehudah he-Hasid has been proven in Idel, "Kabbalistic Prayers and Colours."

216. The Hebrew phrases stem from the *Amidah* prayer, and constitute strong evidence that visualization is connected with prayer. The sequel of our citation mentions *kavvanah* in prayer.

217. *Hashmal* and *Malbush* are numerically equivalent: 378.

218. See Idel, "The World of Angels in Human Shape," p. 58 n. 217, and R. Joseph Ashkenazi's *Commentary to Sefer Yezirah*, fol. 27a, and so on.

219. For more on these processes, see Chap. VIII below.

220. On this Kabbalist, see Moshe Hallamish's preface to *Kabbalistic Commentary*, pp. 11–27; Georges Vajda, "Un Chapitre de l'histoire du conflit entre la Kabbale et la philosophie: La Polémique anti-intellectualiste de Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi de Catalogne," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age* 23 (1956): 45–144.